

REMARKS

In response to the above-identified Office Action, Applicants amend the application and seek reconsideration thereof. In this response, Applicants amend claims 1, 5, 7, 30, 34, 36-37, 40, 46, 111, and 113. Applicants cancel claims 4, 6, 33, 38-39, and 114. Applicants do not add any new claims. Accordingly, claims 1, 5, 7-9, 30, 34-37, 40-44, 46, 48-49, 111-113, and 115 are pending in the application.

I. Objections to the Claims

The Examiner objected to claim 46 for depending from a canceled claim. Claim 46 has been amended to depend from a pending claim. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claim 46 are requested.

II. Claims Objected to Under 35 §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1, 4-9, 30, 33-38, 40-44, 46, 48-49, 111-113, and 115 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 or 103 as anticipated by or, in the alternative, as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,143,805 issued to Anderman et al. (hereinafter "Anderman"), in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,852,113 issued to Yokota et al. (hereinafter "Yokota") or U.S. Patent No. 4,862,328 issued to Morimoto et al. (hereinafter "Morimoto").

Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 30 to include the elements of dependent claims 39 and 114 as well as intermediate dependent claims. The Examiner indicated in page 6 of the Office Action mailed March 1, 2004 that claims 39 and 114 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Thus, Applicants believe that claims 1 and 30 contain allowable subject matter and are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the anticipation and obviousness rejection of claims 1 and 30 are requested.

In regard to claims 5, 7-9, 34-37, 40-44, 46, 48-49, 111-113, and 115, these claims depend from independent claims 1 and 30 and incorporate the limitations thereof. Thus, for the reasons mentioned above in regard to independent claims 1 and 30, these claims are also believed

by the Applicants to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness and anticipation rejection of these claims are requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that claims 39 and 114 whose subject matter is now incorporated into independent claims 1 and 30 contain allowable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely claims 1, 5, 7-9, 30, 34-37, 40-44, 46, 48-49, 111-113, and 115 are patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207 3800.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on May 28, 2004.

Lillian E. Rodriguez

May 28, 2004